

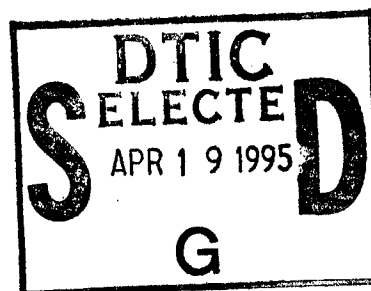
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Group Dynamics - The Coalition Warfare Commander's  
Nightmare.

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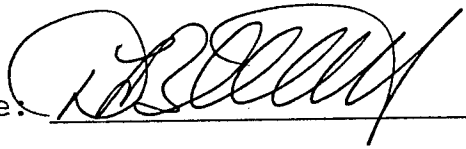
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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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## Abstract of

### GROUP DYNAMICS - THE COALITION WARFARE COMMANDER'S NIGHTMARE

Lessons learned from the recent Gulf War highlighted the fact that tomorrows' conflicts will be increasingly characterized by coalition warfare. The coalition commander must be prepared to undertake operations within a potentially divisive atmosphere of coalition commands. His or her success may depend upon the level of preparation in the basics of multi-national group dynamics. Early consideration will decrease potential operational difficulties and coordination problems. It is the intent of this paper to propose a change to the current format of the commander's estimate of the situation as designed in JCS Pub 5-03.1. This revision would directly identify and include those very factors which concern multi-national group dynamics and take into account the diverse political, military, and cultural factors affecting his/her coalition command. The groundwork for making these changes to the commander's estimate will follow a three part development. Accordingly, a brief review of the factors that concern coalition formation and cohesion will be developed. Next, a short review of the format and items considered currently in the Commanders Estimate will be considered. In the final section the material will be synthesized and a proposal for implementing the change the commander's estimate will be provided.

Lessons learned from the recent Gulf war highlighted the fact that tomorrows' conflicts will be increasingly characterized by Coalition Warfare and that the "United States [has] emerged as the logical leader of future coalition[s]...."<sup>1</sup> With this in mind, the coalition commander is faced with tremendous challenges in directing and maintaining the cohesion of the forces under his/her operational control. The commanders' preparedness in operating within the potentially divisive atmosphere of coalition commands is crucial to his/her success. If the commander is ill prepared for the basics of multi-national group dynamics, operational difficulties and coordination problems will be increased. The question begs to be asked - at what point and in what fashion does the coalition commander take into account the diverse political, military, and cultural factors affecting his/her coalition command?

It is the intent of this paper to propose a change to the current format of the commander's estimate of the situation as designed in JCS Pub 5-03.1 in order to facilitate coalition warfare commanders. This revision would directly identify and include those very factors which concern multi-national group dynamics which could significantly affect the accomplishment of the mission. The groundwork for making these changes to the commander's estimate will follow a three part development. Accordingly, a brief review of the factors that concern coalition formation and cohesion will be developed. Next, a short review of the format and items considered currently in

the Commanders Estimate will be considered. In the final section the material will be synthesized and a proposal for implementing the change the commander's estimate will be provided.

Today's operational commanders need to possess the rudimentary factors of coalition formation and cohesion in order to more ably direct the coalition and its efforts. In the literature addressing inter-state dynamics, there is a broad spectrum of research, theories, and analysis concerning coalition formation and cohesion. The terms alliance and coalition are both used to denote multi-national operations but are restrictively defined in JCS Pub 3-0. The difference being in that an alliance is considered to be a formal agreement between two or more nations while a coalition is a *ad hoc* arrangement between two or more nations. For the purposes of this discussion on formation and cohesion, the terms will be used in the more general manner and may be used interchangeably, but it is recognized that specific restrictive definitions exist.

A coalition/alliance is generally referred to as a relationship of two or more nation-states that have agreed to:

1. collaborate to achieve a solution to a mutually perceived problem;
2. to increase their capabilities;
3. pursue national interests jointly or in parallel courses of action;
4. expect a high probability that assistance will be

rendered to partners.

The distinguishing features that characterize coalitions and alliances can be summarized as follows: existence of real or implied enemies, a contemplation of military engagement and risk of war, and a mutuality of interest(s).

Coalitions are formed for a variety of reasons by nation states. A nation's membership in a coalition is grounded in the initial reasoning and analysis performed when determining whether to participate in a coalition. Three models influence nations to affiliate in coalitions. First, there is the mathematical-normative model. This model derives rational solutions to conflict situations. Second, there exists a economic cost/benefit model and explains coalition formation in terms of cost benefit calculations. Third, the social-psychological model reflects coalition formation in calculations of a states own individual advantages and ideology.

Regardless of the model of formation, the overriding principle is that nation-states join coalitions in response to practical political, enhanced security, and international legitimacy reasons. Coalitions offer shared advantages and interests, as well as shared disadvantages and risks. A coalition agreement may increase the forces necessary to either deter or defeat a perceived threat. The use of a coalition may also add legitimacy to the proceedings under International Law.

There are three broad categories of coalition/alliance operations. These categories constitute formal arrangements and can be used to demonstrate the coalition's/alliance's common interests. These interests may be either broad and long term, limited and short term, or with specific objectives.

The United Nations illustrates the most formal of these alliances/coalitions. Within the United Nations structure each member nation pursues a common objective in their desire to continue their nation state. The United Nations also offers a high degree of legitimacy under International Law. However, there is rarely a unanimous consensus of opinion. This alone severely degrades its effectiveness and timeliness of action.

The next broad category of coalitions/alliances consist of regional organizations. These coalitions/alliances offer more focused and homogenous group dynamics in terms of shared interests. These regional coalitions/alliances are generally considered to be long term and enduring in nature. NATO served as a good example of a stable and effective regional coalition/alliance during the Cold War. The advantage of regional organizations is the collective knowledge gained through longevity and the emphasis on training and organization efforts made in its sustainment.

Finally, *ad hoc* coalitions exemplify groups of nation-states brought together as an outcome of some significant event. *Ad hoc* coalitions generally have a limited common interest and a limited lifespan. The most recent example of a

ad hoc coalition is the coalition of states participating in the Gulf War.

Of those coalitions of interest to us the ad hoc coalition seems to represent the most widely used and preferential coalition. This model allows members to act in concert when necessary, but does not require participation for a significant time frame.

Coalitions/alliances are subject to inter-state dynamics and stresses that could create severe tensions in working relationships as changes in national interests, and perceived cultural differences affect actions. Cohesion is addressed throughout the coalition/alliance literature. The key to coalition/alliance cohesion is often identified as the sense of purpose that formed the coalition/alliance in the first place.

There are both national and international factors that have direct effects on the cohesion and efficacy of the performance of alliances and coalitions. If national interests, cultural differences, or subtle situational changes occur within the member states, the coalition/alliance may experience stresses that create rifts in the unity of purpose. The general factors that have been found to affect the cohesion of all coalition/alliance relationships are: the threat; the decision making structure; its size; the coalitions capabilities and credibility (legitimacy). Other factors that must be considered are:



1. ideological similarity - the degree of difference in cultural, religious, and political ideology;
2. the regime instability - what political changes occur to members of alliance/coalition;
3. size, distance, and goals - these factors create differences in emphasis and sincerity of participation;
4. nature of international system;
5. amount of internationally perceived threat;
6. costs in terms of behavior in future situations, dissonance costs, time costs and persuasion costs.

Research has shown in general, that the cohesion of the coalition/alliance is directly attributed to the severity of the threat. As Ward indicates his book *Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics* "If all partners of a defensive military coalition perceive a common enemy or threat, the alliance is likely to withstand strains caused by ideological incompatibilities or distrust arising from personality differences between political leaders." However, Ward's statement does not relieve the coalition commander from establishing efficient and effective relationships among all coalition partners so a mission is accomplished successfully. Efforts must be made to maintain a coalition stable and focused. If coalition objectives are not congruent, or the potential enemy is not the same, there is a tendency to experience severe problems of coordination and cooperation.

The coalition commander and staff members face unique situations that involve "uncertainties, questionable or incomplete data, and several possible alternatives."<sup>2</sup> The commander's estimate is designed to allow the commander to formulate solutions to problems using a systematic approach. "The commander's estimate has been institutionalized within the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) and is therefore a integral part of both *deliberate* and *crisis* action planning processes."<sup>3</sup> The utility of this tool is its ability to apply "... thoroughness, clarity, judgment, logic, and professional knowledge to the task."<sup>4</sup> It also permits the commander to ensure the ultimate course of action is *suitable*, *feasible* and *acceptable*. It is the critical initial tool that allows the process of planning for and conducting a campaign or major operation. In general, there are seven basic steps in preparing a commanders estimate. NWP 11 (Rev F) Draft lists these steps in a summarized guide, shown in figure 1. The commander's estimate based on the variable amount of time available to act, may be a very pro forma document or may be a quick assessment of the situation by the commander himself. If adequate preparation time is provided, the estimate is a synthesis document using the information provided by the commander and the staff. The basic format for preparing a written commander's estimate is delineated in JCS Pub 5-03.1 and is shown in abbreviated outline form in figure 2. The commander's estimate endeavors to consider all the circumstances affecting the situation and provides a

## SUMMARIZED GUIDE FOR THE COMMANDER'S ESTIMATE

1. Mission Analysis
  - Study superiors mission.
  - Derive the mission.
  - Formulate a mission statement.
  - Identify externally imposed constraints.
  - Identify the objective(s).
  - Summarize key points of the mission analysis.
2. Considerations Affecting Possible Courses of Action.
  - Consider characteristics of the area of operations.
  - Derive relative combat power of opposing forces.
  - Tabulate strength and weakness factors.
  - Make initial determination of adequacy of own forces.
3. Enemy Capabilities (EC's).
  - Develop enemy capabilities.
  - List enemy capabilities in relative probability of adoption
4. Identification and Test of Own Courses of Action.
  - Develop tentative courses of action.
  - Define a concept of operations for each own course of action.
  - Test for suitability.
  - Make preliminary tests for feasibility and acceptability.
  - List own courses of action retained.
5. Analysis of Opposing Courses of Action.
  - Decide on a measure of effectiveness.
  - Predict outcomes for each interaction.
  - Interpret the results of the analysis.
  - List own courses of action retained.
6. Comparison of Own Courses of Action.
  - List and consider advantages and disadvantages.
  - Identify actions to overcome disadvantages.
  - Make final tests for feasibility and acceptability.
  - Weigh relative merits of own courses of action and select one.
7. Formulate the Decision.
  - Transform the selected course of action into a statement of what the force as a whole is to do.

Figure 1

## Outline of the Commander's Estimate

### Commander's Estimate of the Situation

1. Mission.
2. The Situation and Courses of Action.
  - a. Considerations Affecting the Possible Courses of Action.
    - (1) Characteristics of the Area of Operations.
      - (a) Military Geography.
        1. Topography.
        2. Hydrography.
        3. Climate and Weather.
      - (b) Transportation.
      - (c) Telecommunications.
      - (d) Politics.
      - (e) Economics.
      - (f) Sociology.
      - (g) Science and Technology.
    - (2) Relative Combat Power.
      - (a) Enemy.
        1. Strength.
        2. Composition.
        3. Location and Disposition.
        4. Reinforcements.
        5. Logistics.
        6. Time and Space Factors.
        7. Combat Efficiency.
      - (b) Friendly.
        1. Strength.
        2. Composition.
        3. Location and Disposition.
        4. Reinforcements.
        5. Logistics.
        6. Time and Space Factors.
        7. Combat Efficiency.
    - (3) Assumptions.
      - b. Enemy Capabilities.
      - c. Own Course of Action.
  3. Analysis of Opposing Course of Action.
  4. Comparison of Own Courses of Action.
  5. Decision.

Figure 2

methodology for arriving at a logical decision. After the review of the mission, the commander's estimate provides an analysis of the area of operations to include: military geography, the transportation and telecommunication capabilities, the political, economic, and sociological factors influencing the situation. A comparative analysis of enemy forces and our own forces is conducted, and finally an analysis of the courses of action available to both the enemy and own forces that results in a final decision on a proposed course of action aimed to achieve the mission requirements. The commander's estimate is thus standardized to "... ensure no matter of importance has been omitted by the commander."<sup>5</sup> and to facilitate its understanding and communication of goals and information to both superiors and subordinates.

The foregoing discussion of the commander's estimate illustrates a process that allows the commander to think through the potential military situation and review all the factors that may influence the situation. Joint Pub 3-0 the Doctrine for Joint Operations points out that "Each multinational operation is unique, and key considerations involved in planning and conducting multinational operations vary with the international situation and perspectives, motives, and values of the organization's members" Therefore, key elements that describe the formation and cohesion of coalitions must be addressed by the coalition warfare commander. It is crucial in considering multi-national operations that the advantages and disadvantages that coalition partners bring to the forum be

adequately developed and considered. The methodology currently in place derives the analysis of the coalition forces in separate sections of the formal analysis. There is no stand alone method of developing coalition force capabilities and of addressing the necessary factors intrinsic to coalition political cohesion.

In order to adequately prepare for coalition warfare changes to the commanders estimate are necessary. These changes must ensure that one; adequate attention is devoted to the coalition's cohesion and recognized by the Commander; and two, the senior military and political officials outside the coalition command recognize their continued responsibilities to coalition dynamics. It is also critical that the commander's estimate address the key problems identified and associated with coalition warfare by developing a *unity of effort, force interoperability, and risk to coalition forces*. The *Doctrine of Joint Operations* (JCS pub 3-0) also lists several considerations, for conducting multi-national operations, in amplification of those listed above that must be examined. These are: national goals; doctrine, training, and equipment; cultural differences; management of resources; national communications.

I propose that a complete section be added that includes a comparative analysis, after the same fashion for describing enemy capabilities, of coalition forces capabilities and relative combat power. A complete analysis of the existing political, economic, and sociological aspects of our coalition

partners must be included. Specifically, add an annex for coalition forces estimate, to be prepared by the intelligence staff in coordination with any coalition liaison officers on the staff. The basic format should be the intelligence estimate with modified and additional sections of information required. Coalition cohesion factors must be included at a minimum in the estimate to provide a register for potential divisive points that may affect the stability and focus of the coalition. Highlights of these crucial areas are outlined below.

1. National Goals. A section used to provide insight into the coalitions partners reasoning for engaging in the coalition and the end state/war termination goals that the partner desires in this situation.

2. Unity of Effort. Estimates concerning the best employment of coalition forces must be provided in order to capitalize on their strengths and weaknesses. Also the commander must account for the "sensitivity to and consideration of national honor, pride, and prestige..."<sup>6</sup> of coalition partners. This section should provide observations on the best method of integrating coalition members into the decision making structure. The decision making profile of the coalition will need to reflect the various costs associated with each partners participation. The perceived costs to each individual partner has far reaching affects in coalition unity. Examples of the types of costs that must be considered include the effects that the coalition behavior will have on

future situations, dissonance costs, time costs and persuasion costs.

3. Doctrine, Training and Equipment. While the majority of the information concerning coalition partners will be developed in the section of allied capabilities, a overall assessment of doctrine, training, and equipment readiness must be prepared to exploit any unique capabilities or correct disparities between actual operational competence and national expectations.

4. Ideological/Cultural Aspects. A review of ideological incompatibilities between members and the identification of differences in social and political values that could create friction among the partners is necessary. Recommendations for alleviating or lessening the potential problems should be made. This type of review after the beginning of Desert Shield resulted in instituting " a rigorous indoctrination program [that] was undertaken to orient U.S. personnel on the regions unique history, customs, religion, law, and mores."<sup>7</sup>

5. Political Considerations. A key factor that influences coalition cohesion is the internal stability of a regime. This element, noted in NWP11 (Rev F), should be examined as political factors and "include such considerations as political stability, alliance relations with other countries, aspects of international law, control over subversion and dissidence, and similar factors may influence a course of action."<sup>9</sup>



" Decisions that would require fifteen minutes in Tampa or Washington would often consume three hours in Riyadh..."<sup>9</sup>

The sentiments expressed here by General Schwarzkopf are typical of the complex relationships and command structure developed within coalition commands. The proposal for adding coalition information to the commander's estimate would immediately open the doors to more effective cooperation and allow accurate planning. This would allow an easy transition into the operational planning phase of the crisis whereupon specific plans and guidelines are produced. The addition to the commander's estimate does not stifle individuality and creativity in handling a problem, but rather provides a planning tool or guideline to help ensure that information and options are not forgotten. A checkpoint if you will, in order to allow effective problem solving. The proposed change to the commander's estimate increases the probability that the commander and his staff will be proactive in dealing with coalition situations rather than reactive.

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